

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: U.S. RESIDUAL FORCES IN THAILAND

REF: BANGKOK 5023

1. ANAN'S MARCH 3 STATEMENT THAT ALL PREVIOUS U.S.-THAI
AGREEMENTS WITH RESPECT TO OUR PRESENCE LAPSE AS OF
MARCH 20 IS UNACCEPTABLE. WE ALSO HAVE CONSIDERABLE
DIFFICULTY WITH PRINCIPLE SIX, WHEREBY U.S. PERSONNEL

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WOULD BE ACCORDED ONLY SUCH PRIVILEGES AS ARE ACCORDED

TECHNICAL EXPERTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES.

2. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT ON FEBRUARY 18, KHUKRIT AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST TO CONTINUE UNDER EXISTING AGREEMENTS UNTIL SOMETHING ELSE WAS WORKED OUT.

3. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ANAN'S AND KHUKRIT'S STATEMENTS RAISE THE QUESTION OF WHO, IN FACT, IS SPEAKING FOR THE THAI GOVERNMENT. UNTIL THIS POINT IS RESOLVED, WE SEE NO POINT IN CONTINUING WORKING-LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DETAILS OF OUR CONTINUED PRESENCE. WE ALSO DO NOT THINK THAT WITHOUT A MEETING WITH KHUKRIT WE CAN AS YET COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE UNDERSTANDINGS WE HAVE REACHED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND WITH CHATCHAI

HAVE BEEN RECONSIDERED AND ARE NO LONGER VALID.

4. ACCORDINGLY, WE THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF THE EMBASSY PASSED OUR REDRAFT OF THE SEVEN "PRINCIPLES" (SEPTEL) TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PRESUMABLY TO WORAPHUT, WITHOUT COMMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, YOU SHOULD REQUEST A MEETING WITH KHUKRIT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. AT THIS MEETING, YOU SHOULD TAKE THE LINE THAT THE STATEMENTS HE HAS MADE AND THE STATEMENTS ANAN HAS MADE ARE INCONSISTENT AND THAT WE CANNOT PROCEED FURTHER IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IS, IN FACT, THE POSITION OF THE THAI GOVERNMENT.

5. YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT YOU BELIEVED WE HAD ACHIEVED FIRM AND FINAL AGREEMENT ON MOST MAJOR ISSUES DURING YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH KHUKRIT AND CHATCHAI. WHILE STATING THAT WE WISH TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE DURING THE THAI ELECTION PERIOD, AND WE ARE SENSITIVE TO THAI PROBLEMS, YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT WASHINGTON CANNOT UNDERSTAND THIS LAST-MINUTE REVERSAL OF THE THAI POSITION. MOREOVER, DURING THEIR MEETING ON NOVEMBER 26, CHATCHAI ASSURED SECRETARY KISSINGER THAT THERE WERE NO DIFFICULTIES IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS.

6. YOU SHOULD POINT OUT THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO
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DISCUSS THE WORDING OF THE "PRINCIPLES" AND THAT THE TEXT WE HAVE PASSED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY REPRESENTS AN OPENING U.S. POSITION WHICH WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO DISCUSS AT LENGTH AND IN DETAIL ONCE WE ARE ASSURED OF ONE CARDINAL POINT: THAT UNTIL NEW AGREEMENTS ARE REACHED AS TO THE STATUS OF OUR FORCES, THE OLD AGREEMENTS WILL REMAIN IN FORCE. THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN ACCEPT A SITUATION WHEREBY OUR FORCES IN THAILAND IN

SUPPORT OF A MUTUAL SECURITY EFFORT WOULD HAVE NO LEGAL PROTECTION OR STATUS.

7. SHOULD KHUKRIT NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU SUCH ASSURANCES, YOU SHOULD INFORM HIM THAT THIS WOULD CREATE A NEW AND DIFFICULT SITUATION IN WHICH YOU WILL HAVE TO SEEK FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. IF KHUKRIT CAN ASSURE YOU THAT OLD AGREEMENTS REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL NEW ONES ARE CONCLUDED AND THAT THEY WILL NOT, REPEAT NOT, LAPSE ON MARCH 20, THEN YOU SHOULD SAY THAT YOU WOULD BE HAPPY TO RECEIVE THROUGH NORMAL FOREIGN MINISTRY CHANNELS HIS GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO OUR REDRAFT OF THE "PRINCIPLES" AND THAT ON THE BASIS OF THIS REACTION WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE FURTHER AT THE WORKING LEVEL. IN ANY EVENT, YOU MUST MAKE IT EXPLICIT THAT THE MARCH 20 DEADLINE MUST BE LIFTED.

8. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO WAY THAT WE CAN DICTATE THE COMPOSITION OF THE THAI SIDE IN YOUR MEETING WITH KHUKRIT, IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE ADVANTAGEOUS IF ANAN COULD BE PRESENT. HE AND WE COULD THUS BOTH HEAR AT THE SAME TIME WHAT THE AUTHORITATIVE THAI POSITION MIGHT BE, AND WE COULD THEN HOPEFULLY AVOID ANY LATER PROTESTATIONS BY ANAN THAT KHUKRIT DID NOT REALLY SAY SOMETHING OR DID NOT REALLY MEAN WHAT WE THOUGHT HE HAD SAID. WE ALSO THINK THAT THE PRESENCE OF GEN. SITTHI WOULD FACILITATE WIDER DISSEMINATION OF KHUKRIT'S POSITION THROUGHOUT THOSE SECTORS OF THE RTG CONCERNED WITH NATIONAL SECURITY. INGERSOLL

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